

HB 5992

Joseph Recesso SR

March 08, 2013

Dear Senator Terry Gerratana, Representative Susan Johnson, Senator Jason Welch, Representative Prasad Srinivasan, and members of the Public Health Committee,

I submit this testimony in support of HB 5992, AN ACT CONCERNING THE TREATMENT OF PERSONS WITH PSYCHIATRIC DISABILITIES

UNREASONABLY RIGID HIPAA LAWS

FROM FOLLOWING MY SON'S COUNSELING THROUGH COMMUNITY HEALTH RESOURCES, (CHR), IT IS READILY APPARENT THAT PRIVACY RULINGS ARE FAR TOO RIGID WHEN IT COMES TO PROTECTING A CLIENT'S PRIVACY. IN FACT SO RIGID, THE RULINGS ACTUALLY HINDER THE PATIENT'S TREATMENT. RULINGS AS THEY STAND TODAY ONLY FOCUS ON PROTECTING THE PATIENT WHILE OVERLOOKING THE FAMILY AND/OR THE CAREGIVERS.

FOR EXAMPLE:

- MY SON, WORKING THROUGH **CHR** IN ENFIELD, CHANGED RESIDENCE TO MANCHESTER. THIS IS WHEN CHR COUNSELING **STOPPED**. IN TRYING TO DETERMINE WHY THE COUNSELING STOPPED, CHR **WOULD NOT TALK TO ME**, THE PARENT.
- THE SIMPLE QUESTION FROM ME, *WHO IS HIS CASE MANAGER*, GOT THE REPLY "CAN'T TALK TO YOU". I WENT FROM SUPERVISOR TO THE NEXT SUPERVISOR WHERE I WAS TOLD MY SON NEEDS TO SIGN RELEASE PAPERS BEFORE ANY CHR PERSONNEL CAN TALK ABOUT HIS CASE. WHEN I POINTED OUT THAT HE HAD SIGNED PAPERWORK IN THE ENFIELD OFFICE, I WAS INFORMED THE PAPERWORK DOES NOT FOLLOW THE PATIENT. IN THE MEANTIME MY SON'S NEEDS WERE NOT ADDRESSED, AND I AM LEFT IN THE DARK AS A CONCERNED PARENT.
- WE FINALLY GOT THE REQUIRED PAPER WORK IN ORDER AND WEEKS PASSED AND THE ABOVE SCENERIO TAKES PLACE AGAIN. APPARENTLY, CONNECTICUT REQUIRES THAT THE PAPERWORK BE REDONE ON A

SPECIFIED SCHEDULE. AGAIN TREATMENT STOPS, WHEN MY SON REFUSES TO COOPERATE AND AGAIN SIGN THE PAPERWORK.

- THIS IS NOT A UNIQUE SITUATION. I AM A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL ALLIANCE ON MENTAL ILLNESS, (NAMI), AND THE BUREAUCRATIC SHUFFLING IS A COMMON COMPLAINT FROM NAMI MEMBERS.
- THIS SITUATION PRESENTS A FRUSTRATING AND WASTEFUL SCENERIO OF BOTH TIME AND MONEY WHEN THE PARENT TRIES TO COMMUNICATE WITH DOCTORS, LAWYERS, AND SOCIAL WORKERS. FOR EXAMPLE, I CAN RELATE A WASTEFUL HOUR AND A HALF, WHEN IT CAME TIME TO ACCESSING TRANSPORTATION OF MY SON HOME FROM THE HOSPITAL FOLLOWING A *TEN HOUR EMERGENCY VISIT*. THE HEAD NURSE, ON 2ND SHIFT LOOKED AT ME AND UTTERED THE WORDS, "I CAN'T TALK TO YOU"!!!!!!!!!!
- MOST FRUSTRATING AND RIDICULOUS OF ALL THIS IS WHEN I ASKED FOR AN EXPLANATION FROM CHR ABOUT THE PAPERWORK. I WANTED TO KNOW IF MY SON HAD SIGNED MY RELEASE PAPERS. THEIR REPLY - "WE CAN'T TELL YOU".
- THE RECENT TRAGEDY AT NEWTOWN HINTED AT THE VERY HARROWING SITUATION CAREGIVERS FACE. THE MEDIA INDICATED THAT THE MOTHER WAS TRYING TO GET CONSERVATORSHIP FOR HER SON, AND IT WAS TAKING A LONG, FRUSTRATING TIME. IN DEALING WITH THE BUREAUCRACY THIS DELAY MAY HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO A REASON FOR THE VIOLENT BEHAVIOR OF A TWENTY YEAR OLD "ADULT." FAMILY INTEREST - AND MOST OFTEN A FAMILY'S VERY COMPREHENSIVE AWARENESS - IS OFTEN PUT ASIDE OR IGNORED IN THE MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM.
- I HOPE I HAVE CLEARLY PRESENTED MY CONCERNS AND I WANT TO COMMENT THAT I WISH I COULD SUGGEST WAYS TO CORRECT THIS COMPLICATED MESS – BUT CAN'T SEE ANY SIMPLE WAY TO CORRECT THIS, AT THIS TIME

I implore you to support this bill.

Joseph Recesso